



COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Westminster Police Department

Andrew E. Hall, Chief of Police

admin@ewpd.org

Produced by the Administrative Services Bureau

January – March 2009

Volume 7 Issue 1

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Each year there are over two million victims of child abuse and neglect in the United States. Child abuse is behavior directed toward children that results in harm or injury or that seriously interferes with normal child development.

The damage caused by child abuse is associated with school failure, criminality, drug and alcohol abuse, and physical and psychological problems. In communities around the country, April is observed as Child Abuse Prevention Month in an effort to raise awareness about abuse, promote nonviolent discipline and good communication between parents and children, and inform families about community resources.

The majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that are entirely preventable. The causes of child abuse are linked to the changing nature of our communities – increased economic stress and isolation combined with fewer resources to support families, particularly those that face special hardships. Conditions such as job loss, divorce, poverty and addiction – and the stress and isolation that accompany these – can also be breeding grounds for mistreatment.

Everyday children are hurt by a parent, guardian, relative, family friend, babysitter or someone else they are familiar with. Each of us can protect children and prevent child abuse. Every effort to prevent and report abuse will make a difference in the quality of life for these children. They are relying on you for help!



Words from Chief Hall

We'd like to welcome our new City Manager, Donald Lamm, to the City of Westminster. He is an experienced manager who has worked in Orange County for a long time. We look forward to his service as City Manager in Westminster.

Inside, you will find information on the people and programs of the Westminster Police Department. We continue to focus our efforts on ensuring our service to the community is of the highest caliber. Please feel free to contact me, or any member of my staff, at any time if there is anything we can do to serve you more effectively.

REMEMBERING CHARLIE WILKINS



On Friday, April 3, 2009, Police Chaplain Pastor Charlie Wilkins passed away at the age of 63. He was the founder and pastor of the Greater Grace Church of Deliverance. Chaplain Wilkins was known throughout the community for his selflessness and for his commitment to serving the community. In fact, he was named Citizen of the Year by the Westminster Chamber of Commerce in 2008.

Charlie Wilkins was many things to many people. He was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a minister, a Police Chaplain, a friend, a coach, an announcer for high school games, a talented speaker and a gifted singer to name a few.

Charlie Wilkins touched the lives of many. His exuberant spirit will be missed. It was an honor to know such a noble man. Charlie Wilkins will forever be in our hearts and thoughts.

Community Feedback



Members of the community often take the time to let us know how the Police Department is doing. We appreciate your letters, emails, and phone calls. Hearing

from you is the best way for us to ensure that we are serving your needs. As always, we strive to provide the best public safety services to each and every one in Westminster.

*Submit Feedback to:
Ja'Nelle Belton, WPD Police
Services Officer – Community
Relations
Email: [jbelton@westminster-
ca.gov](mailto:jbelton@westminster-ca.gov)*

CANDLELIGHT VIGIL



On January 29, 2009, a candlelight vigil was held at the Westminster Police Department's memorial site to honor fallen officer Steven Phillips.

Officer Steve Phillips was a skillful and highly trained traffic investigator. He died in the line of duty on January 29, 2004, in a vehicle collision.

The evening vigil was attended by City Council members, community leaders, Westminster Police Department personnel and a multitude of City employees.

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS LUNCHEON

On February 24, 2009, the Westminster Chamber and nearly 200 others assembled at the 2009 Public Service Awards Luncheon held in the Crystal Ballroom in the Westminster Rose Center.



This annual Chamber event honors individuals who have distinguished themselves in public service. Recipients of the Public Service Award are selected by their department directors or supervisors from the City of Westminster, Midway City Sanitary District, Orange County Fire Authority and California Highway Patrol Officers for merit, valor, heroism and continuous service to our community.

MADD Deuce Award Recipients



Alcohol-impaired driving is the most frequently committed violent crime in the U.S. On average someone is killed by a drunk driver every 40 minutes.

Each year Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) recognizes law enforcement officers who they feel go above and beyond in their daily efforts to keep drunk drivers off our streets. Any officer who makes more than 25 drunk driving (DUI) arrests in a calendar year is honored with their Deuce Award.

The following officers received the Deuce MADD Award this year:

Officer Matt Edinger **61** arrests
Officer Jose Flores **55** arrests
Officer Nick Tran **35** arrests

These same officers were also MADD Award recipients last year.

Officers Edinger, Flores and Tran were recognized by representatives of MADD at the City Council meeting on February 25, 2009.

We appreciate the efforts of these officers on removing impaired and dangerous drivers from the streets.

Little Saigon Satellite Station Open House



The Little Saigon Investigative Satellite Office (ISO) held a V.I.P. open house event on February 27, 2009 at its new location (15496 Magnolia #111). In attendance were the three members of the United States Congress who supported the federal funding for the office: Congressman Ed Royce, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, and Congresswoman Sanchez. Also in attendance were State Senator Lou Correa and State Assemblyman Van Tran. Mayor Margie Rice and the Westminster City Council completed the list of elected officials in attendance.

The ISO opened earlier this year. The unit has already begun to investigate criminal activity which is affecting the Little Saigon area. One of the main missions of the ISO is to combat illegitimate or illegal businesses operating in the Little Saigon area.



Hardening the Target

Recently, there has been a rise in vehicle burglaries in Westminster.

The most common loss in vehicle burglaries includes portable GPS units, iPods/MP3 players, laptop computers, and purses. The majority of these items are left out in the open either on the dashboard or on the front or rear floor boards. This makes a vehicle burglar's job much easier. By leaving these items in plain view and so easily accessible, burglars do not have to actually enter the vehicle. The window can be broken and the burglar can reach into the vehicle, to take the property. To lessen your chances of becoming the victim of a vehicle burglary, before exiting your vehicle, **remove all valuables.** This simple step will drastically reduce the chance of your vehicle being burglarized.



When Should You Call 9-1-1?

The Westminster Police Department receives 3,500 emergency 9-1-1 calls each month. Over 50% of the 9-1-1 calls received come from a wireless phone. Do you know when to call 9-1-1?

IS A PERSON HURT OR IN DANGER? DO YOU NEED THE POLICE, FIRE OR AMBULANCE? Nine-one-one should only be used for emergencies. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police/sheriff, fire department or ambulance. If you are unsure of whether your situation is an emergency, go ahead and call 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 dispatcher can determine if you need emergency assistance and route you to the correct location.

WHEN CALLING 9-1-1 DO YOUR BEST TO STAY CALM AND ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS. Staying calm can be one of the most difficult, yet

most important things you do when calling 9-1-1. It is very important that you stay as calm as possible and answer all the questions the dispatcher asks. Dispatchers are trained to obtain the most critical information as quickly as possible.

KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE EMERGENCY. Be aware that the 9-1-1 center that answers a wireless 9-1-1 call may not be the 9-1-1 center that services the area that the wireless caller is calling from. Look for landmarks, cross street signs and buildings. Know the name of the city you are in. Knowing the location is vital to getting the appropriate police, fire or EMS units to respond. Providing an accurate address is critically important when making a wireless 9-1-1 call.

IF YOU CALL 9-1-1 BY MISTAKE, DO NOT HANG UP THE PHONE. If you call 9-1-1 by accident, stay on the line until you can tell the dispatcher that you called by accident and there is no emergency. This saves the dispatcher from having to call you back to confirm there is no emergency or send police to your location.

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO CALL 9-1-1. Be sure they know what 9-1-1 is, how to dial from your home and cell phone, and to trust the 9-1-1 dispatcher. Make sure your child is physically able to reach at least one phone in your home. When calling 9-1-1 your child needs to know their name, parent's name, telephone number, and most importantly their address. Tell them to answer all the dispatcher's questions and stay on the phone until instructed to hang up.

Relay for Life



Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. It offers everyone in the community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Each team has a representative on the track at all times during the event. Relays are 24 hours in length; representing the reality that cancer never sleeps. One in three people will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime. The American Cancer Society Relay For Life unites communities across the country each year to **celebrate** the lives of those who have battled cancer, **remember** loved ones lost, and **fight back** against a disease that takes too much.

The **American Cancer Society Relay For Life** in Westminster is scheduled for **Saturday and Sunday, August 8th and 9th.**

If you are interested in participating as a WPOA Team member "**COPS FOR A CURE**" please e-mail Al Brackett (ABrackett@westminster-ca.gov). He will provide you with a donation envelope to start your fund raising.

Participants that raise \$50.00 by August 1, 2009, will receive a "Cops For A Cure" t-shirt. If you raise \$100.00, you will receive the American Cancer Society Relay for Life 2009 t-shirt as well as the WPOA "Cops For A Cure" t-shirt. The WPOA team can include

WPOA members and family members as well.

COPS FOR A CURE in 2008 raised almost \$9,000.00 and currently, we have \$1,380.00 towards our 2009 total.

- **Celebrate** the lives of those who have battled cancer. The strength of survivors inspires others to continue to fight.
- **Remember** loved ones lost to the disease. At Relay, people who have walked alongside people battling cancer can grieve and find healing.
- **Fight Back.** We Relay because we have been touched by cancer and desperately want to put an end to the disease.

READ ACROSS AMERICA



The National Education Association annually sponsors Read Across America. NEA's Read Across America is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss.



The Purpose of Read Across America

Motivating children to read is an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school.



Now in its twelfth year, Read Across America focuses on motivating children to read, in addition to helping them master basic skills. In support of this program, Westminster Police personnel participated in classroom readings at local schools.



School Enforcement



The Traffic Division receives complaints regularly from school officials and parents in regards to traffic violations being committed near elementary and junior high schools. In an effort to address these complaints, the Traffic Division has been conducting periodic "Saturation Patrols" at various schools to ensure the safety

of the children. During these Saturation Patrols, between the morning hours **7:30AM-8:30AM**, motorcycle officers are positioned at assigned schools to enforce any and all traffic violations.

The purpose of this concentrated enforcement is to educate the public about proper driving habits in school zones, through heightened police presence and enforcement efforts. These enforcements are conducted for one to two days at each school to ensure that parents/drivers are aware of the enforcement activity. The increased enforcement efforts make drivers more aware of the need to drive more cautiously and follow the traffic laws.

COMMENDATION



To: **Gene Rosen**
Parking Control Officer

From: Sergeant Mark Nye
Traffic Division

I would like to commend Parking Control Officer **Gene Rosen** for being an exemplary employee and going above and beyond on a consistent basis. Gene wrote a record **6,655 parking tickets** in **2008**, 79 of which were for handicap violations.

In addition, Gene is very observant, not just of parking violations, but of suspicious and criminal activity. He regularly calls in suspicious persons and activity and recently reported a home invasion robbery that had just occurred. Gene was driving around in his Parking Control truck looking for parking violations when someone in another vehicle drove up behind him, repeatedly honked their horn and flashed their lights to get his attention. Gene made contact with the occupant of the vehicle,

thinking this was someone who wanted to talk about his issuing them a ticket. The driver exited his vehicle and excitedly told Gene that his friend was being robbed at his residence. The man told Gene that while on the phone with his friend he overheard his friend say, "Don't shoot us, we'll give you anything you want."

After talking with the man, Gene ascertained that the robbery was in progress somewhere near his current vicinity. Gene made radio contact with WPD Dispatch advising of a possible residential robbery.

Gene found the approximate location of the robbery, as pointed out by the reporting party, and came across one of the victims who had been pistol whipped, was bleeding and kneeling in the street. Gene went to his aid and moved him behind a block wall to a position of safety in the event other suspects were still present. Gene then advised dispatch the location of the robbery and the condition of the victim he found. Although faced with a language barrier, Gene was able to communicate with the victim well enough to get a description of the suspects and their vehicle and provided this information to Dispatch and responding officers.

Gene went well above and beyond and risked his own life to protect the life of another. He held up well under pressure and provided Dispatch critical information that was valuable to responding officers and later to investigators.

Baker to Vegas



Every year, the Westminster Police Department participates in the

Baker to Vegas Relay. It is a 120 mile relay race from Baker, California to Las Vegas, Nevada.

The "Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay Run" took place on March 14-15, 2009. WPD ranked 2nd place in this year's event.



**CONGRATULATIONS &
GREAT JOB EVERYONE!**

WESTMINSTER POLICE CONTINUE ENFORCEMENT ON BUCKLING UP



The Westminster Police Department will be aggressively enforcing the State's occupant protection laws as part of California's 2008-2009 *Next Generation Click It or Ticket* mobilization. Every month from November 2008 through September 2009, the Westminster Police Department will be out targeting drivers and passengers who are not using their seatbelts. The campaign relies on heavy enforcement and public education as a means to help California achieve the highest seatbelt use rate in the nation. California currently has the fourth highest seatbelt use rate at 94.6%.

"We want to make sure all drivers and passengers buckle up and that their children are properly fastened in car seats, on every ride, day and night," said Traffic Sergeant Mark

Nye. "Our officers will be on the lookout for those who are not buckled up and for teens and children not riding properly restrained. We will not accept excuses or give warnings. It's *Click It or Ticket*."

California has a primary seatbelt law which requires that every passenger in the car, including the driver, is required to wear a seatbelt at all times. If stopped and found in violation, law enforcement will issue citations without warning. Tickets for first seatbelt violations range from \$80 to \$91 for adults and \$330 to \$401 for children under age 16, depending upon the county. Additionally, children age 12 and under are required to ride properly restrained in the back seat.

More than 280 law enforcement agencies will be participating in this year's *Next Generation Click It or Ticket* mobilization.

For additional tips on traffic safety please visit our website at www.ci.westminster.ca.us.

PROJECT 999



The Project 999 Bike Ride begins at the California Peace Officers' Memorial in Sacramento, where the ride participants are given time to reflect on the sacrifice made by those who have lost their lives.

The riders then begin the 630 mile journey to the Orange County Peace Officers' Memorial in Santa Ana, California. The majority of

the route is along California's beautiful coastline, including Santa Cruz, Monterey, Big Sur, Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara.

Once the group enters Orange County on the fifth day, they assemble on the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Warner where they are escorted the remainder of the route by local law enforcement personnel.

The caravan rides to the Peace Officers Memorial located within the Plaza of the Flags in downtown Santa Ana, the county seat for Orange County. The riders last gathering together, after the exhausting achievement of the ride, is a moment of silence in front of the memorial where they once again honor the officers they paid tribute to in Sacramento five days earlier.

The ride concludes with a candlelight vigil honoring the fallen officers and their families. Each rider places a rose on the memorial in honor of the fallen officer they represented on the bike ride. The Orange County Memorial was dedicated in 1986 and now commemorates 48 Peace Officers killed in the line of duty while serving the residents of Orange County.

Westminster Police Department will be sending riders to participate in this annual memorial bike ride. The bike ride is the largest fund raiser for this organization. Last year, the Westminster Police Department raised over \$12,000 for the memorial fund.

Part of the efforts to raise funds will involve the selling of raffle tickets. A drawing will be held at the conclusion of the memorial ride on May 19th, 2009. There are many great prizes to be had and you do not have to be present to win!

If you would like to purchase raffle tickets, please contact Alan Aoki (AAoki@westminster-ca.gov) or Kevin MacCormick (KMacCormick@westminster-ca.gov). Raffle tickets can be purchased for \$1.00 each.

SWAT Callout



We are fortunate here in Westminster in that the cities of Cypress, Fountain Valley, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach and Westminster have combined efforts concerning SWAT operations. This regionalized effort has resulted in larger and more efficient tactical elements, supported by a tactical dispatch group and special negotiators. The combined group is known throughout Orange County as "West County SWAT."

From time to time, our community is faced with critical incidents that necessitate special teams and tactics (West County SWAT) in order to reach peaceful solutions. For example, a man recently became upset with his family and was distraught over financial setbacks he had experienced. He armed himself with a handgun and refused to cooperate with Westminster Police Officers who initially responded to help him. Situations such as this require special "back-up," so officers called for West County SWAT.



Through the course of negotiation attempts, utilization of special

equipment such as robots, and through professional tactical team deployments the distraught man ultimately came out of his home and surrendered to SWAT Officers without anyone being harmed.

The above example represents just one incident of many successful life saving actions Westminster Police Officers deal with in conjunction with combined SWAT operations.

Getting To Know Your Police Department From The Moment You Walk In

Police Business Lobby Services

Hours of Operation

Open 7 Days a Week

7AM to 7PM*

*Closed City Holidays



The Front Counter is staffed with part time and volunteer personnel who are the first friendly faces here to greet you. Their role is to

help get to the core of your visit and quickly determine how they can help you, as well as monitor the high volume of phone calls coming into the department.

The Front Counter is also heavily supported by the Records Bureau personnel. The Records Bureau is responsible for the daily processing of crime and arrest reports, traffic collision reports, active warrants, pawn slip notifications, field investigative contacts, restraining orders, vehicle impounds, and bicycle registrations. The Bureau is required to process state and local computer entries associated with stolen, lost or found property, vehicles, court orders, sex and drug registrants, to name a few.

Additionally, the Bureau is specialized in the handling of public records requests, whether through lobby services, mail or subpoena requests. This requires specialized training in the California Public Records Act requirements.

The Records Bureau is comprised of one (1) Supervisor, six (6) full time Records Specialists, and one (1) Crime Analyst.

Reports must be processed and distributed to the



various Investigative Divisions within the Department for timely follow up. Distribution must be made throughout the criminal justice system, particularly the Orange County District Attorney's Office for timely filing of in-custody arrests for successful prosecution. The Court Liaison works closely with Records Specialists to streamline the filing of criminal cases. This team effort has provided a more efficient process in filing cases and has provided better support to the District Attorney's office.

During 2008, the police business lobby had a high volume of citizens walking through our doors. The Records Bureau processed over 13,000 crime report requests, over 1400 traffic collision report requests, and handled over 7,000 lobby citizen contacts and mail requests for public records requests, parking citation payments and vehicle impounds.

The Records Bureau is also trained with the Uniform Crime Reporting standards. This requires the reporting of Part 1 Crimes (serious

crimes) and monthly arrest statistical data to the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigations. On a monthly basis, the Records Supervisor, Specialists and Crime Analyst cross check all data for published reports. Some of this statistical data can be found online on our City website: (www.ci.westminster.ca.us).

In addition to their regular duties, our Records Specialists also serve as backup for female matron duties to the jail facility. Their pat down and searches help detention officers process female arrestees who attempt to hide dangerous items, needles and syringes, or other sharp items that could pose a threat.

Over the years, the Records Bureau has transitioned from a data entry heavy group to a more efficient records processing team, especially with the advent of technology like document imaging, electronic reporting, and other automated systems. The Records Bureau spends a great deal of time reviewing electronic data for accuracy, completeness and consistency.

Whether it is on the phone, in person or in writing, the Westminster Police Department Records Bureau strives to maintain a high level of customer service, while working within the confines of the laws we are sworn to uphold.

On the City's website, you can learn more about laws pertaining to releasing records, statistics and access our "Frequently Asked Questions" section. We recommend getting to know your police department starting with the

lobby services available to you. By doing so, it will help build a bridge of understanding as to why law enforcement works a little differently than the average private business.

In the next issue: ***Why can't I get a copy of my report?*** Focus will be on the processes that take place before a copy of crime report, traffic report or an arrest report may take a while before you are eligible to have it.

July 4th Fireworks Are No Blast for Pets

Information Courtesy of The Humane Society of the United States



Returning home from a holiday celebration, Sharon Moore and her family discovered feces on their living room floor.

The sliding glass door to their backyard was open, and a hole had been dug under their fence.

The Moores were gone for only four hours, but D.O.G., their 2-year-old, aptly-named white German Shepherd, was gone. Left on her own to face the tumult of fireworks and loud celebrations, she escaped, apparently to seek the familiar—her family—even if she had no idea where to look.

"From what we can tell, when D.O.G. heard the fireworks she freaked out and pooped on the floor inside—for the first time ever—then she opened the sliding glass door with her paw, and dug a hole outside our fence.... She went

searching for us," said Moore, of Maitland, Fla.

The Moores' search for D.O.G. ended when she was found dead alongside a road where she was often walked.

No Celebration

Moore believes that D.O.G., who wasn't normally scared of thunder or other loud noises, panicked from the cumulative effects of the fireworks, the excited voices outside, and being left alone inside the house

The Moores' tragic loss isn't unique. Pets often become frightened and frantic by the noise and commotion of Independence Day. In fact, animal shelters across the country are accustomed to receiving "July 4th" dogs—dogs who run off during fireworks celebrations and are rescued by animal control officers or good samaritans who take them to the safety of a local shelter.

Leave Them At Home

Fortunately, preventing pet problems on Independence Day is possible by simply planning ahead and taking some basic precautions.

"With a little bit of planning and forethought, you can enjoy the excitement of the Fourth of July and know that your animal companion is safe, sound, and enjoying a little peace and quiet," said Nancy Peterson, an issues specialist with The Humane Society of the United States.

To protect *your* pet on the Fourth of July, take these precautions:

- **Resist the urge to take your pet to fireworks displays.**
- **Do not leave your pet in the car.** With only hot air to breathe inside a car, your pet can suffer serious health effects—even death—in a few short minutes. Partially opened windows do *not* provide sufficient air, but they *do* provide an opportunity for your pet to be stolen.
- **Keep your pets indoors at home in a sheltered, quiet area.** Some animals can become destructive when frightened, so be sure that you've removed any items that your pet could destroy or that would be harmful to your pet if chewed. Leave a television or radio playing at normal volume to keep him company while you're attending Fourth of July picnics, parades, and other celebrations.
- **If you know that your pet is seriously distressed by loud noises like thunder, consult with your veterinarian before July 4th** for ways to help alleviate the fear and anxiety he or she will experience during fireworks displays.
- **Never leave pets outside unattended, even in a fenced yard or on a chain.** In their fear, pets who normally wouldn't leave the yard may escape and become lost, or become entangled in their chain, risking injury or death.
- **Make sure your pets are wearing identification tags so that if they do become lost, they can be returned promptly.** Animals found running at-large should be taken to the local animal shelter, where they will have the best chance of being reunited with their owners.

If you follow these simple precautions, you and your pet can have a safe and happy Fourth of July.

The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street, NW
Washington, DC

VECTOR CONTROL Reporting Dead Birds

If you find a dead bird, and it appears to have died within the last 24 hours, carefully, and without touching the bird, place the carcass in a plastic bag and put it in a cool or shady place. There is a limit to the number of birds we can test, especially from areas that have submitted several samples already. You may be instructed to dispose of the carcass. Between 7:00am and 2:30pm on Monday through Thursday, and 7:00am and 1:30pm on Friday, please contact:

Orange County Vector Control
District
13001 Garden Grove Boulevard
Garden Grove, California 92843-
2102

Telephone: (714) 971-2421
Ext. 117
